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EISENBRAUNS

Offprint from:

Cana Werman (ed.), *From Author to Copyist: Essays on the Composition, Redaction, and Transmission of the Hebrew Bible in Honor of Zipi Talshir*

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Septuagint and Samareitikon

Jan Joosten

OXFORD

Introduction

It is generally held that the Septuagint translators were Jews.¹ Indeed, how could it be otherwise? Who else, in the early Hellenistic period, had the linguistic and exegetical knowledge necessary to translate the old Hebrew Scriptures into Greek? It must be so. And yet, the religious identity of the translators merits renewed scrutiny. They were Jews, but what kind of Jews? Judaism of the Second Temple period was notoriously diverse, accommodating many different tendencies and theologies. Egyptian Judaism differed in many respects from Judaism in the metropolis.² On this too there is wide agreement. So, here is a question that has rarely been asked in recent times: which metropolis?³ When the original Septuagint, the Pentateuch, was translated into Greek during the first half of the 3rd century B.C.E., the schism between “Jews” and “Samaritans” was probably still waiting to happen.⁴ This raises the possibility that among the group who produced the Septuagint were “Jews” who looked

Author's note: It is a pleasure to offer this essay to Zipi Talshir, from whom I have learned much and continue to learn.

1. See recently E. Tov, “Reflections on the Septuagint with Special Attention Paid to the Post-Pentateuchal Translations,” in *Die Septuaginta: Texte, Theologien, Einflüsse*, ed. W. Kraus, M. Karrer, and M. Meiser, WUNT 252 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 3–22, in particular pp. 5–7.

2. See, e.g., my article “The Aramaic Background of the Seventy: Language, Culture and History,” *BIOSCS* 43 (2010): 53–72.

3. In the 17th and 18th centuries, several authorities held that the Septuagint was based on the Samaritan Pentateuch; see, e.g., Johann Gottfried Eichhorn, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, 4th ed. (Göttingen: Rosenbusch, 1823) §§387–88; and see the overview of H. Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914), 437–38. This line of reasoning was refuted by Wilhelm Gesenius, *De Pentateuchi Samaritani origine indole et auctoritate* (Halle: Renger, 1815), and consequently abandoned.

4. See J. D. Purvis, *The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Origins of the Samaritan Sect*, HSM 2 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968); M. Kartveit, *The Origin of the Samaritans*, VTSup 128 (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

to Mount Gerizim—and perhaps paid their temple tax there—rather than Jerusalem as their spiritual center. As I will argue, this possibility needs to be taken seriously. I will approach this question in a roundabout way, taking my point of departure in a rather obscure corner of textual history and criticism.

***Samareitikon* Readings in Manuscripts of the Septuagint**

An investigation of the relation between the Samaritans and the Greek Bible will naturally set out from a series of ancient readings expressly marked as Samaritan in origin.⁵

Attestation and Origin

When European scholars such as Petrus Morinus and Flaminius Nobilius began to collect and edit whatever they could find of the Greek text of the Bible in the late 16th century, they encountered among many other interesting things a number of marginal readings in manuscripts of the Septuagint—about 40, all of them in the Pentateuch—marked as $\sigma\alpha\mu$, $\tau\omicron\ \sigma\alpha\mu$, or in one or two cases: $\tau\omicron\ \Sigma\alpha\mu\alpha\rho\epsilon\iota\tau\iota\kappa\omicron\nu$ “(the) Samaritan.”⁶ Bernard de Montfaucon included these readings in his reconstruction of the Hexapla published in 1713, forming the hypothesis that Origen had incorporated them into the margins of his voluminous work and that they were transmitted from there into the manuscript tradition.⁷ Frederick Field in his edition of 1875 followed suit and included, according to his own count, 43 readings attributed to this source.⁸

Since Montfaucon and Field, many scholars have repeated the claim that the preserved *Samareitikon* readings were transmitted via the Hexapla.⁹ It must be said, however, that Montfaucon’s evidence was flimsy, not to say nonexistent, and that no new data have come to light confirming this view. It is true that *Sa-*

5. See R. Pummer, “The Greek Bible and the Samaritans,” *REJ* 157 (1998): 269–358.

6. According to the Cambridge Edition (Brooke and McLean), $\tau\omicron\ \Sigma\alpha\mu\alpha\rho\epsilon\iota\tau\iota\kappa\omicron\nu$ is spelled out in c2 (= R 135) on Gen 44:5, 15. $\tau\omicron\ \Sigma\alpha\mu\alpha\rho\epsilon\iota\tau\iota\kappa\omicron\nu$ is spelled out also in a scholion in 344’ on Gen 4:8 (see Origen on Genesis, PG 12, 101, but without reference to the *Samareitikon*), but the term here most likely refers to the Hebrew text of the Samaritan Pentateuch.

7. Bernard de Montfaucon, *Hexaplorum Origenis quae supersunt* (Paris, 1715), conveniently accessible in the reprint in PG 15. For the inclusion of *Samareitikon* readings, see §VIII (PG 15, col. 35).

8. Frederick Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt*, vols. 1–2 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1875), lxxxii–lxxxiv.

9. See, e.g., J. Wasserstein, “Samareitikon,” in *A Companion to Samaritan Studies*, ed. A. D. Crown, R. Pummer, A. Tal (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1993), 209–10; A. D. Crown, *Samaritan Scribes and Manuscripts*, TSAJ 80 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 15; Pummer, “The Greek Bible and the Samaritans,” 269; A. Schenker, “Textgeschichtliches zum Samaritanischen Pentateuch und Samareitikon: Zur Textgeschichte des Pentateuch im 2. Jh. V.Chr.,” in *Samaritans: Past and Present*, ed. M. Mor and F. Reiterer (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010), 105–21, in particular p. 109. A few scholars cautiously refrain from affirming this claim; see, e.g., S. Brock, “Bibelübersetzungen I,” *TRE* 6 (1980): 169; N. Fernández Marcos, *Introducción a las versiones griegas de la Biblia*, 2nd ed. (Madrid: CSIC, 1998), 176–79.

mareitikon readings come to us via Septuagint manuscripts, especially *catena* manuscripts, which also transmit readings attributed to Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion. The latter likely go back to the Hexapla.¹⁰ The association between the *Samareitikon* and the “Three” in transmission history may lead to the idea that they all go back to the same source. But thought should be given to the fact that the same channels also transmit ὁ Σύρος readings, which according to recent research were generated in the 4th century and could hardly have figured in the margins of the Hexapla.¹¹ The company they keep in the margins to Septuagint manuscripts says very little about the origin of the *Samareitikon* readings. It is to be noted, as well, that Jerome and Eusebius, who comment so enthusiastically on the various textual forms of the Greek Bible and who enjoyed direct access to Origen’s great work, never refer to the *Samareitikon*. Although this is an argument from silence, it does make the Hexaplaric origin of the preserved readings rather doubtful.

Textual Profile 1: The Samaritan Tradition

Whatever the origin of the *Samareitikon* readings, there can be no doubt that they form a well-defined group and that, as their name indicates, they ultimately originate from the Samaritan community.¹² To begin with, some of the readings clearly reflect the Samaritan Hebrew text, not the MT:

Gen 46:28

Israel sent Judah ahead to Joseph *to lead the way before him* into Goshen (NRSV).

σαμ	ὁφθῆναι ἔμπροσθεν αὐτοῦ	to appear before him
LXX	συναντῆσαι αὐτῷ	to meet him
MT	לְהוֹרֹת לְפָנָיו	to show the way before him
SP	לְהַרְאוֹת לְפָנָיו (<i>lērāʾot</i>)	to appear before him

The *Samareitikon* reading agrees not only with the consonantal text of the Samaritan Pentateuch (SP), but also with the Samaritan reading tradition, where

10. See R. Ceulemans, “Greek Christian Access to ‘The Three’, 250–600 CE,” in *Greek Scriptures and the Rabbis*, ed. T. Michael Law and A. G. Salvesen, CBET 66 (Leuven: Peeters, 2012), 165–91; O. Munnich, “Les révisions juives de la Septante: Modalités et fonctions de leur transmission. Enjeux éditoriaux contemporains,” in *La Bible juive dans l’Antiquité*, ed. Rémi Gounelle and Jan Joosten, Histoire du Texte Biblique 9 (Prahins: Zèbre, 2014), 141–90.

11. See H. Lehmann, “The Syriac Translation of the Old Testament as Evidenced around the Middle of the Fourth Century (in Eusebius of Emesa),” *SJOT* 1 (1987): 66–86; B. ter Haar Romeny, “‘Quis sit ὁ Σύρος’ Revisited,” in *Origen’s Hexapla and Fragments*, ed. A. Salvesen, TSAJ 58 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 360–98.

12. The *Samareitikon* readings are given on the basis of the second apparatus of the Göttingen edition of the Pentateuch. A full edition with Hebrew and Aramaic parallels from the MT, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the targums is found in Pummer, “Greek Bible and the Samaritans.”

the verbal form is interpreted as a *niphal*.¹³ The MT reads a different verb, “to show the way.”¹⁴ *Samareitikon* readings agree with the consonantal text of the SP against the MT also in Exod 32:18; Lev 13:51, 52; Num 32:29, 31; and Deut 27:4, 26.¹⁵

If they agreed only with the SP, readings like this could be explained as ad hoc renderings of the Samaritan text. The profile of *Samareitikon* readings is much more involved, however. The readings agree, not only with the Samaritan text where it differs from the MT, but also and far more often with Samaritan exegesis, notably in the form it takes in the Samaritan Targum:

Gen 44:5

σαμ	καὶ αὐτὸς πειρασμῶ περιάξει	And he with a testing he tests by it
	ἐν αὐτῶ	
LXX	αὐτὸς δὲ οἰωνισμῶ οἰωνίξεται	And he with divination divines by
	ἐν αὐτῶ	it
MT	וְהוּא נִחַשׁ בְּיַחַשׁ בּוֹ	(≈ SP)
ST ^{AJ}	וְהוּא נִסִּי בְּיַחַשׁ בּוֹ	And he with a testing he tests by it

Here the *Samareitikon* reading has not simply been derived from the Samaritan Hebrew but rests on an interpretation designed to exonerate Joseph of magical practices. The same interpretation surfaces in the Samaritan Targum. As Field already realized, the agreement between *Samareitikon* readings and the Samaritan Targum is surprisingly frequent.¹⁶ A large majority of *Samareitikon* readings show striking similarity to the Samaritan Targum—sometimes with all manuscripts, sometimes only with some of them. In recent years, a few scholars have attempted to relativize the alliance between *Samareitikon* readings and the Samaritan Targum by pointing to the fact that similar interpretations are at times found in the Jewish targums as well.¹⁷ This is true but irrelevant.

13. For the reading tradition of the Samaritans, see Z. Ben-Ḥayyim, *The Literary and Oral Tradition of Hebrew and Aramaic amongst the Samaritans*, vol. 4: *The Words of the Pentateuch* (Jerusalem: Academy of the Hebrew Language, 1977). See also S. Schorch, *Die Vokale des Gesetzes*, vol. 1: *Genesis*, BZAW 339 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004); A. Tal and M. Florentin, *The Pentateuch: The Samaritan Version and the Masoretic Version* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2010). [Heb.]

14. The reading of the Samaritan Pentateuch is also attested in the Peshitta: *lmeḥzāyū qdāmaw(hy)* “to appear before him.”

15. Admittedly, it also happens once or twice that the *Samareitikon* reading follows the MT against the SP in one or the other small detail, such as the rendering of a *waw* or the particle כִּי: see the readings in Gen 50:19 and Exod 14:20. These readings may indicate that the Samaritan text was not entirely unified. Some of them may also be due to the fact that the *Samareitikon* was not a fresh translation of the Samaritan Hebrew but a revision of the Septuagint (see below).

16. Field, *Hexapla*, lxxxiii–lxxxiv and 329–30; Samuel Kohn, “Samareitikon und Septuaginta,” *MGWJ* 38 (1894): 1–7, 49–67, in particular pp. 2–7, 49–50.

17. See particularly Pummer, “Greek Bible and the Samaritans.”

As is well known, the Jewish and Samaritan Targums stand in some sort of relation to one another. In many passages, the Samaritans may have borrowed readings from Targum Onqelos or other Jewish sources. A source agreeing with the Samaritan Targum may therefore be expected to agree now and then with Jewish sources. However, none of the Jewish targums aligns systematically with the *Samareitikon* readings in the way the Samaritan Targum does. Moreover, some of the readings are attested in no Jewish sources.¹⁸ There must be a direct relation between the two sources.

Only a handful of *Samareitikon* readings do not agree with the Samaritan Targum. Some of these may have been attributed to the *Samareitikon* by mistake.¹⁹ Others may go back to a targumic rendering that is no longer preserved.²⁰ The manuscripts of the Samaritan Targum are notoriously late, and they attest great textual fluidity.

Textual Profile 2: The Connection to the Septuagint

In addition to the connection with Samaritan exegesis, *Samareitikon* readings show clear dependence on the Septuagint. The 19th-century scholars who worked most on these readings did not underscore this characteristic, but it is undeniable. Some of the readings link up with typical Septuagint vocabulary. The Tetragrammaton is rendered with Greek κύριος (Exod 12:42). The “Tent of Meeting (*’ohel mo’ed*)” is called ἡ σκηνὴ τοῦ μαρτυρίου, as in the Septuagint (Exod 38:26[8]). The altars of Balaam, referred to as βωμοί in the Septuagint, are called θυσιαστήρια in the *Samareitikon* reading (Num 23:1)—using a word found for the first time in the Septuagint and probably created by the translators themselves.

Other readings preserve elements of the Septuagint text:

Exod 32:18

<p>σαμ οὐκ ἔστι φωνὴ ἀποκρίσεως ἀνδρείας καὶ οὐκ ἔστι φωνὴ ἀποκρίσεως ἡττητῆς ἀλλὰ φωνὴν ἁμαρτιῶν ἐγὼ ἀκούω</p>	<p>It is not the voice of an answer of courage, nor the voice of an answer of defeat, but the voice of sins I hear.</p>
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18. See, e.g., Gen 49:23; Lev 13:8; 25:5. See in more detail my essay “Des targumismes dans la Septante?” in *The Targums in the Light of Traditions of the Second Temple Period*, ed. Thierry Legrand and Jan Joosten, JSJSup 167 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 54–71, esp. pp. 69–71.

19. Thus the *Samareitikon* readings in Gen 5:25, 26 were almost certainly attributed to this source by mistake, on the basis of an error made by Jerome. See A. Geiger, *Nachgelassene Schriften*, ed. L. Geiger (Berlin: Gerschel, 1876), 4.122.

20. See, notably, the reading in Exod 3:22, καὶ διασώθητε ἀπὸ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων “and you will be saved from the Egyptians,” reading the Hebrew verb as a *niphal*. This interpretation is not reflected in the reading tradition as recorded by Z. Ben-Ḥayyim; it is not found in the extant manuscripts of the Samaritan Targum or in the Arabic version of the Samaritans, or in any other Samaritan source I have been able to retrace. Nevertheless, it is typologically similar to many Samaritan readings in that it implies taking the *nota accusativi* as a preposition meaning “with” (interpreted as “from with” in the context).

LXX	Οὐκ ἔστιν φωνὴ ἐξαρχόντων κατ' ἰσχὺν οὐδὲ φωνὴ ἐξαρχόντων τροπῆς, ἀλλὰ φωνὴν ἐξαρχόντων οἴνου ἐγὼ ἀκούω	It is not a voice of those striking up a song of force, nor the voice of those striking up a song in a rout, but a voice of those striking up a song of wine I hear.
MT	אֵין קוֹל עֲנוֹת גְּבוּרָה וְאֵין קוֹל עֲנוֹת חִלּוּשָׁה קוֹל עֲנוֹת אֲנָכִי שִׁמְעֵ	
SP	אֵין קוֹל עֲנוֹת גְּבוּרָה וְאֵין קוֹל עֲנוֹת חִלּוּשָׁה קוֹל עֲנוֹת אֲנָכִי שִׁמְעֵ	

Although the *Samareitikon* diverges a great deal from the Septuagint, agreeing pointedly with the SP, it preserves the conjunction ἀλλά, which has no equivalent in the Hebrew text.²¹ Rather than attributing this to coincidence, I see this as the *Samareitikon*'s being a somewhat radical rewriting of the Septuagint.

Anonymous Readings Representing the Samareitikon

Field counted 43 *Samareitikon* readings, a number that is still regularly quoted in reference works and encyclopedia articles.²² Samuel Kohn in the 19th century knew several more readings, however, and as more ancient manuscripts were collated, the actual number of readings grew. The Cambridge and Göttingen editions of the Septuagint increased the number, successively. Reinhard Pummer, who recently drew up a list on the basis of the Göttingen Pentateuch, assures us that 70 readings are marked (το) σαμ in the manuscripts.²³

To these marked readings, a number of anonymous readings need to be added. Field recognized four anonymous marginal readings as belonging to the *Samareitikon*. Geiger added about 12, and Kohn around 50. In the preparation of the Göttingen volume of Leviticus, Detlef Fraenkel noted that anonymous readings in the margin of Codex M and its group tended to agree with the Samaritan Targum in the same way as the *Samareitikon* readings.²⁴ In the second apparatus of the Göttingen Leviticus, 74 anonymous readings are identified as being equal or similar to the Samaritan Pentateuch. Altogether some 100 readings are to be reckoned with.

These anonymous readings indeed closely resemble the marked *Samareitikon* readings. They agree with the Samaritan Pentateuch where it diverges from the MT:

21. Other *Samareitikon* readings that have preserved elements of the Septuagint are: Exod 26:5; Num 4:25; and 31:16. In a few instances, the reading agrees in small details with the Septuagint and MT against the Samaritan Pentateuch: see Gen 50:19 and Exod 14:20. Compare what was said in n. 15 above.

22. See, e.g., Brock, "Bibelübersetzungen I," 169; Fernández Marcos, *Introducción*, 174.

23. Pummer, "Greek Bible and the Samaritans."

24. See J. W. Wevers, *Leviticus*, Septuaginta 2/2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 32 n. 1.

Lev 19:25

M'	καὶ συνάξετε (ὕμῖν τὴν πρόσοδον αὐτοῦ)	and you will gather
LXX	πρόσθεμα (ὕμῖν τὰ γενήματα αὐτοῦ)	an adding
MT	להוסיף	to add
SP	להאסף	to gather ²⁵

Abstaining from picking the fruit of a fruit-tree for the first four years and not eating it until the fifth year serves to *augment* the harvest according to the MT but to *gather* the harvest according to the Samaritan Pentateuch. The interpretation of this divergence cannot be discussed here, but it is clear that the marginal reading in the M group agrees with the SP against the MT. The anonymous readings also agree, sometimes strikingly, with the Samaritan Targum:

Lev 11:22

M'	γοβα
LXX	βροῦχον
ST	גובה
MT	הַאֲרָבָה (≈ SP)

Instead of the Septuagint's βροῦχος "locust," the marginal reading gives a Greek transcription of the Aramaic equivalent in the Samaritan Targum.

While clearly reflecting the Samaritan text and exegesis, many of the unmarked readings also link up in some way with the Septuagint, showing that they actually depend on the latter:

Lev 4:5

M'	οὗ τετελείωται ὁ τόπος	whose place has been made perfect
LXX	ὁ τετελειωμένος τὰς χεῖρας	who has made his hands perfect
ST	דאשלם ית אתרה	
MT	<i>vacat</i>	
SP	אשר מלא את ידו	

In translating the idiomatic expression "to fill the hand" (meaning "to consecrate"), the marginal reading reflects the interpretation of "hand" as "place," in agreement with the Samaritan Targum. At the same time, the reading preserves the verb used in the Septuagint, τελειόω "to make perfect, to consecrate."²⁶

25. This may be a passage where the consonantal text of the SP and the reading tradition disagree; see Tal and Florentin, *Pentateuch*, 698. The Samaritan Targum reflects the consonants of the SP, however.

26. See also Lev 16:26, where typical Septuagint vocabulary is found in the *Samareitikon* reading.

The anonymous readings have the same profile as the marked *Samareitikon* readings. They are transmitted via the same sources. At times, an anonymous reading in one manuscript is identified as το σαρμ in another.²⁷ For all these reasons, it seems that the marked and unmarked readings all originate from the same textual source.

Glosses or Remains of a Complete Version of the Pentateuch?

A question that may be addressed at this juncture is the nature of the *Samareitikon* readings: Are they ad hoc glosses produced on the basis of the Samaritan tradition by a knowledgeable scholar of antiquity?²⁸ Or are they extracts from a full Greek version of the Pentateuch? Although the first possibility cannot definitively be excluded, the evidence favors the second one. External evidence is tenuous but interesting. Montfaucon drew attention to a note of Epiphanius on the Bible translator Symmachus. Epiphanius states that Symmachus was a Samaritan who converted to Judaism and wrote his translation “in order to refute the interpretation” of his former co-religionaries:²⁹

Οὗτος τοίνυν ὁ Σύμμαχος πρὸς διαστροφὴν τῶν παρὰ Σαμαρείταις ἐρμηνειῶν ἐρμηνεύσας τὴν τρίτην ἐξέδωκεν ἐρμηνείαν.

This Symmachos published the third translation so as to distort (?) the interpretations in use among the Samaritans. (Epiphanius, *De mens. et pond.* 16, PG 43, 264)

The passage seems to indicate that the Samaritans had their own Greek translation of the Pentateuch at the time of Symmachus. Origen could therefore have excerpted it in his Hexapla. Montfaucon himself admitted that Epiphanius’s testimony is not always trustworthy, however.

Stronger arguments can be drawn from the character of the readings themselves. Some of them are highly original, as we have seen above. Others, however, are rather plain and consist of expressions more or less synonymous with the Septuagintal equivalent.³⁰ Instead of the Septuagint’s προφυλακὴ “guard,” for instance, the *Samareitikon* reading is φύλαξις “guarding” in Exod 12:42 (לִּלְשׁוֹנֵי); instead of ἀπερίτμητος, it is ἀκρόβυστος, both words meaning “uncircumcised” (Lev 26:41).³¹ Although in these passages the *Samareitikon* reading conforms to the Samaritan Targum, the Septuagint reading would have been perfectly acceptable as an equivalent. There would have been no reason to provide these *Samareitikon* readings if they originated as ad hoc renderings of the Samaritan Targum. Thus, these readings appear to witness a running Greek text.

27. See the list in Pummer, “Greek Bible and the Samaritans,” passim.

28. As suggested by Geiger, *Nachgelassene Schriften*, 122.

29. Montfaucon, PG 15, col. 36.

30. See Kohn, “Samareitikon,” 51.

31. See also the readings in Exod 14:15; Lev 25:25; 26:41; 26:43; Num 4:25.

An additional argument is the occasional attestation of doublets (and even one triplet) among the *Samareitikon* readings:

Exod 8:14

σασμ	σωροδς σωρούς· βωμοδς βωμούς	heaps, heaps; bases, bases
LXX	θημωνιάς θημωνιάς	heaps, heaps
MT	מִמְרֵם מִמְרֵם (≈ SP)	(The Egyptians gathered the frogs together) in heaps

Such doublets are not easy to explain, but they indicate a high likelihood that the readings were drawn from a Greek source, not produced ad hoc on the basis of the Samaritan tradition.³²

Possible Direct Attestations of the *Samareitikon*

Alongside the marginal readings in Septuagint manuscripts that have been gathered ever-more exhaustively since the 17th century, paleographic and epigraphic evidence has come to light that presents a similar textual profile.

The Giessen Fragments

In 1911, Alfred Rahlfs and Paul Glaue published four fragments of a Greek manuscript of Deuteronomy that had recently been discovered in Antinoopolis in Egypt (P. Giessen 13, 19, 22, 26, parchment, paleographically dated to the 5th–6th century). According to their analysis, the manuscript did not represent the Septuagint but the *Samareitikon*. Their main arguments were:

- the manuscript supports the Samaritan reading “Mount Gerizim” (αργαριζιμ or αρ γαριζιμ in Greek) in Deut 27:4, where the MT has “Mount Ebal”—the place where an altar was to be erected upon the people’s entry into the promised land;
- the manuscript has a number of readings similar though not identical to *Samareitikon* readings in other passages (notably, συνετοί “understanding” for זקנים “elders,” rendered σοφοί “wise” in the *Samareitikon*);
- the manuscript has at least one reading that agrees strikingly though not exclusively with the Samaritan Targum (Deut 29:23[24] מֵה חֲרִי הָאֵף—[ως ισ]χυρα η οργη “how strong is the anger”).

This conclusion has been accepted widely. It was contested, however, by Emanuel Tov in an article published in 1971.³³ In Tov’s view, the readings singled

32. Doublets are found also in Exod 26:5; 28:4 (triple translation); Lev 8:9; Num 29:35; 31:18.

33. For an example of the acceptance of this conclusion, see, e.g., Fernández Marcos, *Introducción*, 175; E. Tov, “Pap. Giessen 13, 19, 22, 26: A Revision of the Septuagint?” *RB* 78 (1971): 355–84.

out by Rahlfs and Glaue could be explained otherwise: “Mount Gerizim” in Deut 27:4 might reflect the original text of the Septuagint; the agreements with the *Samareitikon* and the Samaritan Targum could equally well be viewed as agreements with Jewish sources. Moreover, Tov found an argument against the identification of the Giessen fragments with the *Samareitikon* in the fact, which he demonstrates convincingly, that the fragments represent a revision of the Septuagint.³⁴

That the Giessen fragments are part of a revision of the Septuagint is an important observation. But it does not militate against Rahlfs and Glaue’s hypothesis. As we have seen, the marked *Samareitikon* readings likewise link up with the Septuagint in several ways. To my mind, the differences between P. Giessen and the marginal readings are to be explained by the nature of the evidence. The marginal readings may have been selected precisely because they differed from the Septuagint. The Giessen fragments represent a running text, incorporating alongside some striking variants a text that is close to the Septuagint but revises it on the basis of the Hebrew text.

Apart from the striking reading in Deut 27:4, there is no overlap between P. Giessen and the attested *Samareitikon* readings. Nevertheless, the similar profile of the material does make it likely that the two witnesses ultimately attest the same Greek version produced by and transmitted among the Samaritan community.

The Samaritan Inscription from Thessaloniki

An inscription discovered in what may be the remains of a Samaritan synagogue in Thessaloniki incorporates a Greek translation of Num 6:22–27, the priestly blessing.³⁵ In another brief article, Tov has argued that this text also is a revision of the Septuagint. His data are again convincing. But there is an additional dimension to this Greek text: apart from being based on the Septuagint, it also contains a few typical Samaritan readings. In one variant, the extract agrees with the Samaritan reading tradition:

34. The dependence of the Giessen text on the Septuagint was not entirely overlooked by Rahlfs and Glaue, although they do not stress this characteristic.

35. See the recent edition with a photograph and discussion of earlier literature in D. Noy, A. Panayotov, and H. Bloedhorn, *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis*, vol. 1: *Eastern Europe*, TSAJ 101 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 100–105. The Samaritan character of the inscription is certain: the Greek text of Num 6:22–27 is preceded and followed by a Hebrew benediction in Samaritan script, and the inscription ends with a blessing on the city of Shechem: “Prosper, Neapolis, with those who love you!” The inscription is dated to the 4th–6th century on palaeographic grounds.

Num 6:27

Thess.	καὶ θήσεται (= θήσετε, act. fut. pl.)	and you will set (my name on them) ³⁶
LXX	καὶ ἐπιθήσουσιν	and they will set (my name on them)
MT	וְשָׂמוּ	and they will set (my name on them)
SP	וְשָׂמוּ	(read <i>wšimû</i> , m. pl. imperative) and set (my name on them) ³⁷
ST	וְשָׂמוּ	(<i>pael</i> m. pl. imp.) and set (my name on them)

It also agrees with the Samaritan Targum in another detail³⁸ and gives the name of Moses in the form Μουση,³⁹ which is unusual in the Septuagintal tradition but corresponds to the Samaritan pronunciation *mūšī*.⁴⁰

The text is very short. No marked *Samareitikon* readings are preserved for this passage, nor do the attested readings correspond to any striking equivalents in the inscription. Nevertheless, the general profile of the text conforms rather well to that of the *Samareitikon* as far as we can determine on the basis of the other witnesses.

Papyrus Geneva 99

P. Geneva 99 (Δ_4 in Brooke-McLean) is a tiny fragment from the 5th–6th century containing parts of a Greek translation of Gen 37:3–4, 8–9. Rahlfs argued that it represents the *Samareitikon*, but Tov contested this identification. In the Göttingen edition of Genesis, the fragment is said to represent a Greek translation of a Jewish Targum.⁴¹ It attests several readings that more closely resemble the Hebrew text (both MT and SP) than does the Septuagint. But it

36. The verbal form has been parsed as third-person-singular future passive ever since the *editio princeps* of Pelekides in 1955. It is to be noted, however, that the form θήσεται is not attested as a future passive in Biblical Greek, where τεθήσεται is used instead (also in compounds). In any case, confusion between α and ε is so frequent in Greek epigraphy that the form may equally well be read as second-plural future active. In view of the manifest Samaritan character of the inscription and the proximity of the latter reading to the Samaritan tradition, this would seem to be preferable.

37. Ms shechem 6 actually reads וְשָׂמוּ; see Tal and Florentin, *Pentateuch*, 425.

38. In Num 6:22, the inscription has ἐλάλησεν μετὰ “he spoke with” instead of the Setuagint’s ἐλάλησεν πρὸς “he spoke to.” This corresponds to the Samaritan Targum.

39. The editors propose normalizing this to Μουση, but there seems to be no good reason to do so. See Noy, Panayotov, and Bloedhorn, *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis*, 1.101.

40. The form Μουση is found, for Moses, in single witnesses to the Septuagint text of Exod 15:24 and Num 12:2. For more information on the different forms of this name, see W. Genesius, *Hebräisches und Aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament*, ed. R. Meyer, H. Donner, and U. Rütterswörden (Berlin: Springer, 2010), 749.

41. J. Wevers, *Genesis*, Septuaginta 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974), 28.

also contains one striking reading that agrees with both the Samaritan reading tradition and the Samaritan Targum:

Gen 37:3

PGen	. . .] σοφῶν	. . . a son] of wise men
LXX	υἱὸς γήρου	a son of old age
MT	בֶּן זָקִיִּים	
SP	בֶּן זָקִיִּים	(read <i>ban zāqīn^m</i>)
ST ^{C(EB)}	בֶּן חֲכִימִין	a son of wise men

The rendering σοφῶν agrees with the Samaritan reading tradition, where the Hebrew equivalent is vocalized as a masculine-plural adjective: Joseph is “a son of *old men*” to Jacob; it agrees with the Samaritan Targum in that “old men” is interpreted as “wise men.” The textual character of the fragment is thus compatible with Rahlfs’s suggestion.

The Greek Bible of the Samaritans

Each of the three witnesses inspected in this section represents a Greek version of the Pentateuch in use among Samaritan readers. It is practically impossible to prove that the three represent the same Greek text, and equally hard to prove that any of them represents the version from which the marked *Samareitikon* readings were excerpted. Nevertheless, analogy and general likelihood suggest that Greek-speaking Samaritans in Late Antiquity would have used and worked from only one Pentateuch text—a text known, perhaps, in a variety of forms in different localities but ultimately going back to a single textual form.

In the present state of our knowledge, it seems legitimate, therefore, to attribute the marginal readings and the other three witnesses to the same Greek version, the one referred to in Antiquity as the *Samareitikon*.⁴²

Conclusions and Perspectives

Looking back at the different pieces of the puzzle, a global picture emerges that, in spite of many holes, allows the formulation of a hypothesis.

The Date of the Samareitikon

In the 19th century, Kohn and Geiger situated the origin of the *Samareitikon* readings shortly after the time of Alexander the Great, around the same time that the Jews produced their Greek version of the Torah.⁴³ As Rahlfs and Glaue

42. The Syrohexapla and a few Greek minuscules contain the translation of “harmonizing” pluses in the Samaritan Pentateuch. The relation of these additions to the *Samareitikon* is doubtful, however. See Pummer, “Greek Bible and the Samaritans,” 313–14, for a list of these pluses.

43. Kohn, “Samareitikon,” 52; Geiger, *Nachgelassene Schriften*, 122. The same time frame is adopted in the idiosyncratic theory of Gaster, which was defended in his

realized, the date envisaged by Kohn and Geiger can hardly be correct. If the *Samareitikon* was a revision of the Septuagint, it must be later. This would also be in agreement with more recent work on the date of the Samaritan Targums.⁴⁴

How much later is hard to say. If the claim that *Samareitikon* readings were included in the margins of the Hexapla is rejected, as I think it should be, the only remaining *terminus ad quem* is the date of the manuscripts. The *Samareitikon* could then have emerged at any point in time between, roughly, the 1st century B.C.E. and the 5th century C.E.

The only specific indication of a more precise period would be the historical one derived from Epiphanius by Montfaucon. If Symmachus was a Samaritan converted to rabbinic Judaism, and if he intended by his translation to refute the Greek version already in use among his former coreligionaries, and if this version was the *Samareitikon*, then the latter must have been in existence before the year 200 C.E. or so. Recent investigations—by Barthélemy, van der Kooij, and Salvesen⁴⁵—have shown that Epiphanius's testimony may originate from a reliable source (perhaps Origen), and that the main elements of his testimony on Symmachus may be authentic. But this whole line of reasoning remains tenuous.

The time frame implied by Epiphanius's stray remark seems rather plausible, however. If Greek-speaking Samaritans produced a Greek version of the Pentateuch agreeing with their Hebrew text and with their exegetical traditions, it stands to reason that they would have done so shortly after that text and those traditions emerged. The definitive "parting of ways" between Jews and Samaritans may have set in with the destruction of the Temple on Mount Gerizim by John Hyrcanus at the end of the 2nd century B.C.E., and seems to have been accomplished by the end of the 1st century C.E.⁴⁶ Both the consonantal text and the reading tradition of the Samaritan Pentateuch may have been fixed during this same period.⁴⁷

Schweich lectures of 1923; see M. Gaster, *The Samaritans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1925), 112ff.

44. See A. Tal, *The Samaritan Targum of the Pentateuch*, vol. 3 (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 1983); R. Macuch, "Les bases philologiques de l'herméneutique et les bases herméneutiques de la philologie chez les Samaritains," in *Études samaritaines: Pentateuque et Targum—exégèse et philologie, chroniques*, ed. J.-P. Rothschild and G. D. Sixdenier (Leuven: Peeters, 1988), 149–58.

45. See A. Salvesen, *Symmachus in the Pentateuch*, JSSM 15 (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1991), 283–97, where earlier literature is discussed.

46. See above, n. 4.

47. See S. Schorch, "La formation de la communauté samaritaine au 2^e siècle avant J.-Chr. et la culture de lecture du Judaïsme," in *Un carrefour dans l'histoire de la Bible*, ed. I. Himbaza and A. Schenker, OBO 223 (Fribourg: Academic Press; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 5–20.

What Was the Samareitikon?

In earlier publications, the *Samareitikon* has often been viewed as the Samaritan equivalent of the Septuagint. In light of what has been said so far, however, it seems more judicious to qualify the *Samareitikon* as the Samaritan equivalent of Theodotion or Aquila.⁴⁸ As the proto-MT and rabbinic interpretation gained prominence, from the 1st century B.C.E. onward, learned Greek-speaking Jews produced revisions of the Septuagint version that agreed better with the standards of their time. The earliest evidence for this process of textual adjustment is the *kaige* recension attested in the Twelve Prophets Scroll discovered in Nahal Hever. Later stages of the same process are Theodotion and Aquila. The revisers in the *Kaige*-Theodotion-Aquila school brought the Septuagint into line with the emerging Masoretic Text, both on the word level and on the level of larger-scale differences. They developed an increasingly consistent method that allowed them to express in Greek whatever was present in Hebrew. They also translated the Greek text in a way that agreed with the exegetical and theological norms of their day. Renderings of this school often cohere with exegetical niceties that are also transmitted in the rabbinic targums and midrashic literature.

Roughly during the same period, it seems, Greek-speaking Samaritans adapted the Septuagint Pentateuch to the textual and exegetical norms that had emerged within their circle. The product of this effort was the *Samareitikon*, the scattered attestations of which have been charted above. Like their Jewish colleagues, the Samaritan revisers sought to adapt the Greek version to the Hebrew text that had come to be adopted by their community. Their renderings adhere more literally to the Hebrew wording than does the Septuagint—although they never attained the degree of accuracy (some would say fanaticism) that is evinced in Aquila. And just as the Jewish recensions are close to the Jewish targums in regard to their theology and exegetical basis, so the *Samareitikon* is close to Samaritan exegesis as expressed in the Samaritan Targum.

Implications for the Septuagint

This brings us back, *in extremis*, to the Septuagint. How can one explain that Greek-speaking Samaritans based their version of the Pentateuch on the Septuagint? Did they not have the resources necessary to produce their own Greek version from scratch? Is that why they borrowed the Jewish translation? A possible analogy to this process is that of the Arabic version of the Samaritan Pentateuch. When Aramaic had died out as a living language and an Arabic version became necessary, the Samaritans did not produce a fresh translation from within their own tradition. They borrowed the *tafsir* of Saadia Gaon, and adapted it progressively to their own text and exegesis. The Arabic translation of the Samaritan Pentateuch is attested in a bewildering variety of

48. Compare Schenker, "Samaritanischen Pentateuch und Samareitikon," 111–12.

manuscripts and text-types, but the Saadianic substratum clearly appears in all old manuscripts, as is indeed noted by Samaritan authorities.⁴⁹ Perhaps something similar happened a thousand years earlier: observing the need for a Greek version of their holy scriptures, the Samaritans took over the Jewish Septuagint and adapted it to their own traditions.

A different approach seems to be preferable, however. The Septuagint version of the Pentateuch was produced, as practically all specialists agree, during the first half of the 3rd century B.C.E. This is more than two centuries before the “schism” between Jews and Samaritans according to recent research on this issue. Several sources attest animosity between the respective religious communities, one being centered in Jerusalem and the one on Gerizim.⁵⁰ The temple establishment in Jerusalem may not have recognized the legitimacy of the temple on Mount Gerizim (built early in the 5th century, perhaps), and vice versa. But a clean break between the two communities is unlikely to have come about before the destruction of the sanctuary on Mount Gerizim by John Hyrcanus at the end of the 2nd century B.C.E. In this perspective, it makes little sense to attribute the Greek translation of the Pentateuch to Jews, as opposed to Samaritans. Josephus reports on conflicts in Alexandria, probably in the 2nd century B.C.E., between those who recognized only Jerusalem as the spiritual center of their faith and those who were attached to Mount Gerizim.⁵¹ Even if these reports contain a kernel of truth, they should probably not be interpreted to mean that these two groups represented distinct and separate communities—if Josephus saw things this way, his views may have been anachronistic. It is much more reasonable to suppose that Egyptian Judaism of the Hellenistic period was composed of a group looking to Jerusalem and a group looking to Gerizim, in addition perhaps to some who recognized the legitimacy of both sanctuaries, and some who could not care less. The community among which the Septuagint came into being included the forebears of both those who would later adhere to Pharisaic/proto-Rabbinic Judaism and those who would later be called Samaritans.

If this line of reasoning is sound, it turns out that the Greek-speaking Samaritans who produced the *Samareitikon* did not borrow the Septuagint from the Jews. They updated and adapted their received text of the Pentateuch to more recent conditions. In this respect, they were acting in the same way as the Jewish groups responsible for the *kaige*-Theodotion-Aquila recensions of the Septuagint.

49. See H. Shehadeh, *The Arabic Translation of the Samaritan Pentateuch* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1989), 1.iii–iv.

50. See, e.g., Sir 50:26.

51. *Ant.* 12.7–10 and 13.74–79. For analysis and bibliographical references, see R. Pummer, *The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus*, TSAJ 129 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 179–99.